



Wellness Council Tool Kit

Building a Healthy Environment

This tool kit was adapted from the
Healthy Utah Wellness Council Tool Kit
“Building a Healthy Environment 2006”
Special thanks to Maria Dixon and Celsa Bowman for their contributions.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Tool Kit

The Wellness Council Tool Kit is a new tool to help your wellness council succeed. In it you will find:

- Program ideas to use at your worksite
- Tips to make your work environment healthier
- Resources to help you succeed.

Set a goal to create a history of your council that can be passed on from year to year. We are sure that as time passes, your team will gain satisfaction by being able to review your past successes and work.



Section 2: Frequently Asked Questions

What is a wellness council?

A wellness council is a diverse group of employees who work to improve the health and well-being of their worksite with simple activities and organizational changes. They are typically comprised of employees from all divisions and levels within the organization (management, professionals, administrative support, etc.) to promote ownership of the program at the “grass roots” level, and include representatives with a variety of skills. Councils create environmental and policy changes, and implement programs designed to facilitate employee wellness.

What does a wellness council do?

Wellness councils plan activities and recommend policies and environmental changes that create a culture of wellness at the worksite. Such efforts are carefully planned around feedback gathered from employees and managers, to ensure resources are targeted towards areas where they will be most useful. Best-practice employee wellness programs have three levels of involvement: activity, policy, and environment.

Why do we need a wellness council at my worksite?

Studies show that worksite health promotion can help improve employee morale, reduce turnover, aid in recruitment, reduce absenteeism, assist with containment of health care costs, and improve health status of employees. It can also help minimize “presenteeism,” which is a term describing on-the-job productivity losses. Best of all, your wellness council can respond to the specific needs and wants of your worksite.

Established wellness councils provide an organized, systematic business approach to health promotion at the worksite.

How much time does it take to be on a wellness council?

A minimal time commitment of one or two hours per month from each team member is all that is necessary.

What are the steps we need to take to get a wellness council started here?

These are the basic steps every council should take. For specific information on additional steps your wellness council should consider, please see the “Getting Started” section of this tool kit.

1. Get upper management support. This is critical to the success of a wellness council.
2. Recruit your committee. A diverse team of employees will help ensure that barriers and limitations have been considered when implementing programs. Make sure that team members have one thing in common: an interest in improving wellness at the worksite.
3. Survey your employees. You don’t want to waste time and resources planning activities that no one wants to participate in. Getting information from the employees your wellness council serves will help guide your efforts and increase the chances of your success.
4. Visit the Utah Council for Worksite Health Promotion website (www.health.utah.gov/worksitewellness) for program ideas and other resources.

Section 2: Getting Started

Adapted from The Well Workplace Workbook: A Guide to Developing Your Worksite Wellness Program

There are three critical steps that all wellness councils should complete before doing anything:

Step One: Management Support and Participation

One of the most important factors in the success of a Wellness Council is the extent and nature of support given to the Council by senior management. It is difficult for a program to be successful without visible support from the top. Senior management support can come in many different forms, including participation in planning, budget approval, communicating support to all employees, and participating as role models in events. Establishing by-laws, like the example in Appendix C, gives credibility to the council and clarity of the support of upper management.

Step Two: Diverse Representation

By including council members that represent the diversity of your workforce, you'll be better able to anticipate the health needs that are unique to certain groups. You'll also be able to modify or customize program implementation strategies to make programs accessible to all employees, regardless of differences.

Step Three: Employee and Organizational Needs Assessments

Health promotion through Wellness Councils works if programs are planned properly and based upon good data. Survey employees about their needs and interests, and build your plan around that information (see sample survey in Appendix A). You'll also want to look at the physical environment in your workplace to determine if it supports health. Check the lighting, ventilation, temperature, workstation design, noise levels, appeal of work areas, contents of vending machines/cafeterias, office equipment, and safety equipment.

Once these first three steps are complete, councils are encouraged to accomplish additional steps, which can be completed in any order. The more steps a council completes, the more likely it is to be successful long-term. But don't feel overwhelmed. Take your time to finish these additional steps!

Step Four: Integration into Organizational Structure

Integrating health promotion into the organizational structure of your agency will ensure its future and continued success. Wellness Councils are most successful when aligned with the business goals and practices of the agency. Three key components can help you integrate a

Section 2: Getting Started

Wellness Council into your organization: developing a mission and vision, focusing on an overall goal, and cooperating and integrating with other divisions in your agency.

Step Five: Operating Plan

Developing an operating plan challenges your agency to adopt the Wellness Council and creates legitimacy for the Council within the organization. Your plan should include an overall goal, and clear, measurable objectives.

Step Six: Employee Feedback and Ownership

When employees know and feel that the Wellness Council is “theirs” they will be more likely to participate and continue involvement. By actively communicating with employees regarding the Council’s response to their needs and interests, you are creating a supportive environment for health promotion and behavior change.

Step Seven: Organizational Policies

Wellness Council duties should be included in performance plans to legitimize and lend credibility to the work being performed by Council members (see example text in Appendix D). Your Council should work to implement policies that support employees taking advantage of Wellness Council and other health promotion programs (like Healthy Utah). Other health related policies such as smoking, exercise release time, management policies to reduce stress, healthy food policies, and time off for preventive exams should be addressed as well.

Step Eight: Health Promotion as Part of the Strategic Plan

Inclusion of the Wellness Council in the strategic plan of the agency validates the long-term commitment of the organization to employee health. It also acknowledges commitment to continuous improvement is necessary and desirable if overall goals are to be accomplished. Without this long-term commitment to employee health, employees will be less successful in initiating behavior change and maintaining changes over a long period of time.

Nutrition and Weight Management

Program ideas:

- **Healthy and Tasty** - Hold a recipe contest, recipe exchange, cooking demo, or taste test of fruit and vegetable dishes.
- **Farmer's Market** - Set up a farmer's market in your cafeteria or break room.
- **Coloring Contest.** Have employees' children color pictures of fruits and vegetables and submit for prizes; then display at a worksite function or around the building.

Resources on the Web:

- **calorieking.com** – Online weight management program
- **www.eatright.org** – Home of the American Dietetic Association, the premiere source of nutritional information on the web.
- **www.shapeup.org**--The mission of Shape Up America! is to provide evidence-based information and guidance on weight management to the public, health care professionals, educators, policymakers and the media.
- **www.dshs.state.tx.us/wellness/resource/FIVEADAY.pdf** – The 5 A Day, 5 A Week Challenge is a four week program designed to motivate participants to increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables.

Physical Activity

Program idea:

- **Utah Walks** – Teams compete to see how many miles they walk. Visit **www.utahwalks.org** for more information.

Resources on the Web:

- **www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_1_5X_Active_For_Life.asp.** The

American Cancer Society's Active for Life program encourages employees to be more active on a regular basis by setting individual goals and forming teams for motivation and support.

- **www.fitness.gov** – The President's Council on Physical Fitness & Sports promotes active lifestyles by providing information and an award program for participants.
- **www.physicalfitness.org** – National Association for Health and Fitness is a network of state and governor's councils regarding health and fitness. Information on this site includes programs that are being run as well as general information regarding wellness programs.
- **http://hprc.stanford.edu/pages/downloads/EP3_JoggingKit.pdf** The Jogging Kit will help your employees increase their physical activity.
- **www.presidentschallenge.org** – The President's Challenge is a program that encourages all Americans to make being active part of their everyday lives.
- **www.dshs.state.tx.us/wellness/resource/Skyscraper%20%20Climb-Body.pdf** The Stairscraper Climb is a program to encourage physical activity among employees through stair climbing.

Stress Management

Resources on the Web:

- **www.flylady.net** – A fun site that will help you manage your stress and get organized
- **www.mindtools.com** – Information on this site will help you build skills to manage your time and stress
- **http://stress.about.com** – Great stress management articles and resources
- **www.pbs.org/kcts/affluenza** – Affluenza is a one-hour television special that explores the high social and environmental costs of materialism and

over-consumption. Learn more about the show at this site.

Tobacco

Program ideas:

- **Quit Line posters and “business cards”**
 - Hang these free posters around your worksite and place the cards out for people to take and reference the Quit Line phone number.
- **Cessation Classes** - Offer smoking cessation classes or give incentives to employees who attend a smoking cessation class.

Free Quitting Resources

- **888-567-TRUTH** – Utah’s toll-free tobacco Quit Line; free assessment and counseling; a Quit Kit to walk you through the quitting process; a personal plan for quitting developed by you and your counselor; a connection to resources in your area; people ready to quit will be offered additional counseling and a free 8-week supply of the patch or nicotine gum;
www.tobaccofreeutah.org/quitline.htm
- **www.utah.quitnet.com** – Learn from science-based smoking cessation resources; get quit tips and advice from expert counselors; get support from the QuitNet community; create your own quit smoking plan; get help when you need it
- **www.tobaccofreeutah.org** – Get all the latest information, resources, posters and data at the Utah Department of Health Tobacco Prevention and Control Program’s website

Other Ideas

- Don’t be a Victim: Wash your Hands - Campaign to prevent the spread of colds and flu

- Maternal and Family Support Programs - Create systems to support breastfeeding and child care such as on-site family care, breastfeeding rooms, etc.
- Promotion of Employee Assistance Program resources
- Kid Safety: Bicycle Helmet Contest - Employee kids and grandkids complete health/safety worksheets to enter into drawings for free helmets

Wellness Team Bulletin Board Ideas:

- Wellness Team current events and updates
- Monthly health messages
- Healthy recipes
- Healthy employee spotlight/recognition

Brown Bag Seminars Ideas:

- Financial health
- Mental health/Depression
- Safety awareness and crime prevention
- Domestic violence prevention
- Elder care strategies, parenting classes
- Injury prevention
- Alternative health practices
- Substance abuse prevention, treatment, and/or counseling
- Job-related skills training
- Arthritis education
- Asthma education
- Cancer Screening for Prevention, Detection, and Education
- First Aid and CPR training
- Automated External Defibrillator (AED) training
- Retirement and Financial Planning (Utah Retirement Systems)
- Elderly Care Strategies
- Parenting Classes
- Job Related Skills Training (Human Resources)
- Domestic Violence Prevention
- Time Management
- Meditation / Relaxation Techniques

Section 4: Additional Resources

Additional Resources:

- **www.hesonline.com** – Health Enhancement Systems has for purchase ready-made programs to help increase the health of your employees.
- **www.wellnessconnection.com/wellpak** – Wellpak has a variety of health and fitness incentive programs for purchase.
- **www.wellnessjunction.com** – Wellness Junction is developed by Health Resources Publishing, which has been providing targeted information to healthcare professionals for the past two decades.
- **www.americaonthemove.org** – America On the Move is a national initiative dedicated to helping individuals and communities across our nation make positive changes to improve health and quality of life.
- **www.smallstep.gov** – Want to get healthy, but don't know how to begin? Start with Smallstep. You will find great resources, an activity tracker, great recipes and a newsletter.
- **http://216.185.102.50/haw** – Heart At Work is American Heart Association's online health promotion program that includes awareness, education and behavior change activities.
- **www.health.utah.gov/genomics/familyhistorytoolkit.html** – The Family Health History Toolkit will help you collect your family health history. Family members share their genetics, environment, lifestyles, and habits. By knowing your family health history you can make screening and lifestyle choices to lower your risk for certain diseases.
- **www.health.utah.gov/diabetes** – The Diabetes Prevention and Control Program has brochures and posters that are available for free with messages about diabetes and how to control the disease.
- **The Check Your Health Program** encourages all Utahns to Eat Healthy, Be Active. Check Your Health offers the following free of charge:
 - Physical Activity and Nutrition Tracker - an easy-to-use tool to help you keep track of what you eat and how much you exercise.
 - Medication Management Checkbook - a booklet that will help you and your doctor or pharmacist keep track of what medications you are taking.
 - The Cook's Companion: A Guide to Healthy Eating - A booklet designed to help you put healthy eating at the top of your list as you shop, plan menus, and make tasty meals and treats.

To order these items or to learn more, visit **www.checkyourhealth.org** or call the Check Your Health Hotline at **1-888-222-2542**.

Section 5: Environment and Policy

Environment and Policy Ideas

Nutrition

- Healthy choices offered at on-site cafeteria
- Break room with microwaves and refrigerators
- Fruit and vegetable choices available at worksite (community fruit bowl, cafeteria, and/or vending)
- Policies regarding healthy choices offered and labeled in vending machines

Physical Activity

- Use and promote the 1.5 hours per week for exercise during lunch breaks
- Organized sports activities at work (walking, ultimate frisbee, basketball, etc.)
- Sponsor on-site aerobics or yoga classes
- Annual golf tournament
- On-site shower and changing facility
- List of walking areas near worksite, marked on a map and/or on trail
- Equipment near gathering areas (break room, copy machines) for office workout

Stress Management

- Promote your Employee Assistance Program
- On-site massage services
- Healthy employee spotlight and recognition
- Worksite relaxation center

Tobacco

- Smoke-free campus policy (no smoking on campus grounds)
- Designated smoking areas away from building doorways and ventilation areas
- Enforce Indoor Clean Air Act policies (no smoking within 25 feet of building)

Administrative

- Set annual objectives for wellness
- Wellness Team mission and vision statements
- Adopt by-laws
- Members add Wellness Team responsibilities to performance plans
- Emergency Disaster Preparedness
- Automated External Defibrillators (AED) on-site
- New employee orientation to emergency preparedness policies and procedure
- www.tdh.state.tx.us/wellness/resource_list.htm – Information on this site is focused on making lasting changes in how your agency perceives health.

Governor Huntsman's Work Well Recommendations

On November 23, 2004, Governor Walker signed a letter asking state agencies to implement eight recommendations, which are designed to help state employees eat better and get more physical

activity. When Governor Huntsman took office in 2005, he endorsed the Work Well Recommendations, and urged all state agencies to implement them.

These recommendations are significant to Wellness Councils, because they primarily focus on environmental and policy improvements at the workplace. Sponsoring physical activity and nutrition programs for employees is fun, but studies show that healthy long-term changes occur only when a worksite's environment and policies support employee health.



Governor Huntsman's Work Well Recommendations

1. Offer healthy menu choices at each work meeting, conference, and training where food is served.
2. Post healthy eating messages in cafeterias, break rooms, and vending areas.
3. Work with vendors in state facilities to include healthy options in vending machines, based on customer preference.
4. Encourage employees to exercise, including utilization of the existing exercise release policy of 30 minutes, three times per week, with supervisor approval.
5. Promote the use of stairs as a way to get more daily physical activity.
6. Encourage employees to walk, bike, or bus to work and, where circumstances permit, provide showers, lockers, bike racks, discounted bus passes, and flexible working schedules.
7. Educate employees about trails and pathways that are safe and near worksites.
8. Establish worksite wellness councils to support healthy eating and daily physical activity.

www.healthyutah.org/workwell



A Healthier You – Healthy Worksite Award

About the Award

The Healthy Worksite Award Program recognizes the outstanding achievements of businesses and organizations in implementing employee health promotion and wellness programs. It acknowledges efforts to facilitate and encourage employee health, enhance productivity, and ensure healthy work environments. About 50 organizations receive the AHY – Healthy Worksite Award each year. The awards are administered by the Utah Council for Worksite Health Promotion.

Sample Award Criteria

General Worksite

- Has a wellness committee and environmental and policy supports
- Programs offered to all employees, spouses, and retirees

Nutrition

Healthy food options in vending machines; provide/encourage healthy food choices at work sponsored meetings
Behavior change programs (i.e. a program to increase fruit/vegetable consumption)

Physical Activity

Physical activity time release policy (workers use up to 30 minutes of their work day for physical activity)

Promote usage of stairs or incentives for physical activity

Healthy Behaviors (Substance Abuse Prevention)

Written policies for a smoke-free work environment and alcohol/drug abuse with referral and treatment program

Stress management information, classes or programs; Employee Assistance Programs

Safety

Seat belt/helmet signage in parking lots

Seat belt use policies while driving/riding in company owned vehicles

Preventive Services

Provide and promote information to employees on medical self care

Promote information and schedule for adult preventive screenings

The Healthy Worksite awards are given each fall in conjunction with UCWHP's annual worksite health promotion conference.

For more information and to view specific award criteria, please visit www.health.utah.gov/ahy and click on "Worksite."

Sample Employee Needs Assessment

This is a *partial* example of an employee needs assessment. Assessments are generally administered once a wellness council is formed, and then periodically every couple years to ensure the wellness council is still focused on the right topics.

1. Which Workplace Health areas would you like information or training in?

- Injury Prevention
- Communication/Conflict Resolution
- Stress Management
- Managing changes
- Work station ergonomics

2. What Healthy Living areas would you like information or training in?

- Eating healthier foods
- Weight management
- Physical activity/exercising more
- Quitting smoking/chewing tobacco
- Alternative health practices

3. What Life Skills areas would you like information or training in?

- Balancing work and family
- Relationships and communicating
- Conflict resolution
- Personal financial management
- Retirement planning/budgeting

4. I am currently participating in:

- Regular exercise programs either organized or self-directed
- Organized sports activities
- Weight loss programs
- Counseling for personal issues

5. How many times per week do you exercise (a minimum of 30 minutes per session)?

- 0 times per week
- 1-2 times per week
- 3-5 times per week
- 6-7 times per week

6. Would you use an on-site fitness center?

7. If you would not use an on-site fitness center, what are your reasons for not doing so?

- Too busy
- Not enough equipment
- Don't like to exercise with co-workers

- Don't know how to operate the equipment
- I work out at an off site fitness center

8. Do you participate in or use any of the following?

- Walking Trail
- Gyms
- Fitness Center/Weight Room
- Aerobics Class
- Yoga Class

9. If you do not use any of the above, what are your reasons for not doing so?

- Too busy
- Not enough equipment
- Don't like to exercise with co-workers
- Don't know how to operate the equipment
- Don't like to sweat during the work day

10. If you use exercise equipment, please indicate which types you like to use.

- Treadmill
- Elliptical
- Stair Stepper
- Bicycle
- Weight machine

11. Would you participate in monthly Brown Bags/Wellness Seminars?

12. Do you feel there are healthy food/vending options available at your worksite?

13. Do you have a place to store/heat your homemade lunch at work?

14. In general, would you say your physical health is:

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

15. In general, would you say your mental health is:

- Excellent
- Very Good
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

16. Which incentives would help motivate you to become healthier?

- Money
- Paid leave
- Competition
- Personal trainer
- Recognition

Example By-Laws

Establishing Wellness Council by-laws gives credibility to the group and allows for clarity of support by upper management.

Cannon Health Building Wellness Council BYLAWS:

I. Authority and Name

The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) established the Cannon Health Building (CHB) Wellness Council.

II. Mission

The CHB Wellness Council functions to enhance and foster the health and well-being of the UDOH Cannon Building employees.

III. Membership

A. Eligibility

Members must work in the UDOH Cannon Health Building and maintain an interest in worksite wellness.

B. Obligations of Membership

1. Members must share a commitment to the mission and goals of the organization.
2. Members must be willing to accept duties on assigned projects.
3. Members must be able to serve as Co-chair, which rotates annually.
4. Members must include wellness council responsibilities in their Performance Plans.

IV. Organizational Structure

A. Composition

Membership will include two co-chairs, a minimum of ten division representatives, and various “members at large.”

B. Membership Representation

The following UDOH CHB divisions will provide the basic membership:

- Community and Family Health Services- 2 members
- Epidemiology/Laboratory - 2 members
- Health Care Financing - 2 members
- Health Systems Improvement - 2 members
- Human Resources - 1 member
- Office of Health Data - 1 member
- Office of Employee Support - 1 member (non-voting)
- The Department of Environmental Quality will provide two additional members:
 - Solid and Hazardous Waste - 1 member
 - Water Quality - 1 member

Department of Environmental Quality members will not be required to include CHB Wellness Council responsibilities in their performance plans.

Other CHB employees interested in participating on the CHB Wellness Council are welcomed and will be considered “Members at Large.” Members at Large will not be required to include CHB Wellness Council responsibilities in their Performance Plans.

C. Term of Office

The term of office for the co-chairs is one year beginning July 1. The term of assignment for division representative members will be evaluated annually in June, in order to accommodate Performance Plan changes, which are due in August.

D. Selection of Office

The co-chair rotation was randomly selected in August 2002. The rotation will repeatedly occur in the following order.

- FY05 - Health Systems Improvement

Section 8: Appendix B continued

- FY06 - Epidemiology/Laboratory
- FY07 - Community and Family Health Services
- FY08 - Health Care Financing
- FY09 - Office of Health Data and Human Resources

E. Co-chair Responsibilities

1. Attend and conduct all meetings.
2. Oversee the planning of agendas for all meetings and the creation of committees.
3. Notify members of meetings ten days in advance.
4. Coordinate the documentation of meeting minutes and distribute them to members within ten days.
5. Act as a spokesperson for the group, advancing the purpose and positions of the CHB Wellness Council through every appropriate means possible.
6. Work with Human Resources and Division Directors to make committee member or replacement appointments as needed.
7. Submit or oversee the submission of initiative proposals to Human Resources and/or Executive Management.

F. Member Responsibilities

1. Attend and participate in all meetings, or send a representative as necessary.
2. Assist in the planning and implementation of council initiatives and projects.
3. Promote council efforts among division staff.
4. Perform other duties as requested by the co-chairs.
5. If unwilling or unable to actively participate as a CHB Wellness Council member, assist co-chairs and division director with finding a replacement.

V. Decision Making

1. Present members will vote upon all major decisions.
2. Voting will occur only when there is a quorum of at least half of the membership.
3. Decisions made at meetings will be considered final unless the majority of members choose to amend them.
4. Only active and participating members will be called to vote.

VI. Goals

1. Advise UDOH Executive Management Team on the development of worksite wellness activities that improve or maintain the physical, social, emotional, occupational, and environmental health of employees.
2. Secure approval from Human Resources and/or Executive Management Team on suggested strategies.
3. Assess, plan, implement, and evaluate (as appropriate) various activities, policies, and environmental supports that encourage and facilitate the health and well-being of CHB employees.

VII. Strategies

- A. Identify gaps in UDOH wellness programming and services.
- B. Prioritize UDOH needs through assessments.
- C. Recommend or take actions that will improve employee wellness.
- D. Follow up to assure appropriate action has been taken.
- E. Evaluate outcomes and recommend modifications to Executive Management Team as needed.
- F. Prepare an annual report for Executive Management Team.
- G. Present various project findings at OpsComm meetings.